

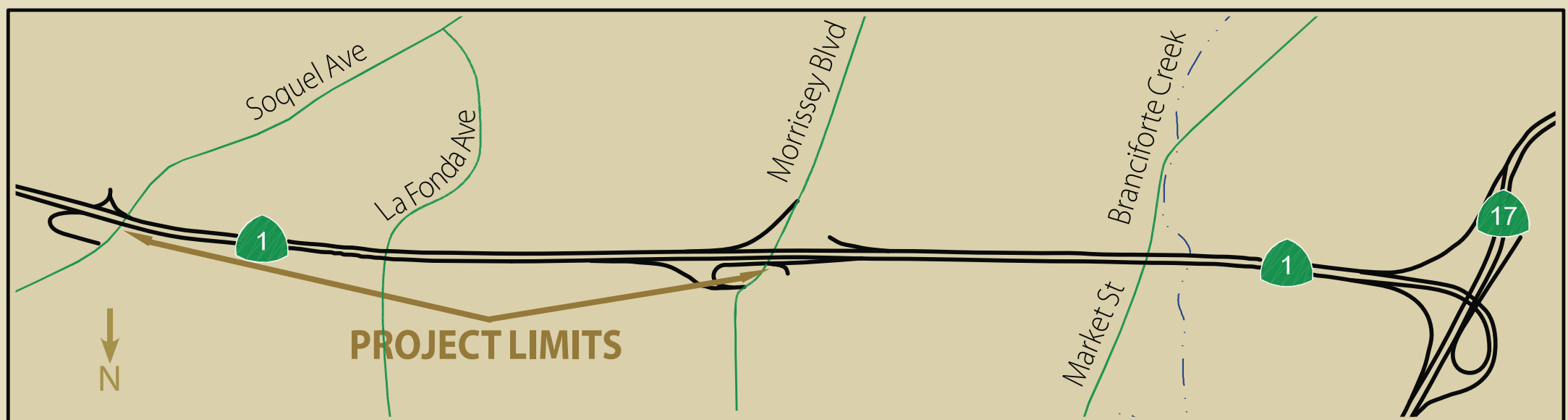
WELCOME TO



STATE ROUTE (HIGHWAY) 1 SOQUEL AVENUE TO MORRISSEY BOULEVARD AUXILIARY LANES PROJECT

**CALTRANS PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE
& SCCRTC PUBLIC HEARING**

NOVEMBER 17, 2005



Meeting Purpose & Project Participants



Purpose of the Caltrans Open House

- Present proposed project to the community
- Describe project design and environmental review processes
- Provide opportunity to speak with and ask questions of the project team
- Obtain public input on issues to be addressed and alternatives to be considered in the environmental document

Purpose of the SCCRTC Public Hearing

- Briefly present the proposed project before the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
- Obtain further input from the community on the project

Agency Involvement & Responsibilities



• **Caltrans:** The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the lead state agency responsible for environmental review of state highway projects under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



• **FHWA:** The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead federal agency responsible for environmental review of highway projects under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



• **SCCRTC:** The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) is the regional agency sponsoring the Auxiliary Lanes Project and has secured the services of technical consultants to assist in preliminary design and the environmental review process under the oversight of Caltrans and the FHWA.

Project Purpose & Benefits

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve traffic conditions for weaving and merging movements between Soquel Avenue and Morrissey Boulevard.

This will also accomplish the following:

- Improved pedestrian and bicycle access across the freeway, including access to Harbor High School and DeLaveaga Elementary School
- Increased shoulder width will be available for disabled vehicles and California Highway Patrol (CHP) enforcement



This project focuses on the busiest section of State Route 1 in Santa Cruz County, between the Soquel Avenue and Morrissey Boulevard interchanges. Average daily volume along this segment is 121,000 vehicles per day (bi-directional in 2004)*. Benefits of this relatively small, low-cost project include:

- Improved traffic flow and operations for commuter, commercial, and recreational traffic
- Reduced weaving and merging conflicts
- Improved safety and mobility for emergency vehicles and access to/from Dominican Hospital
- Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access via the La Fonda overcrossing

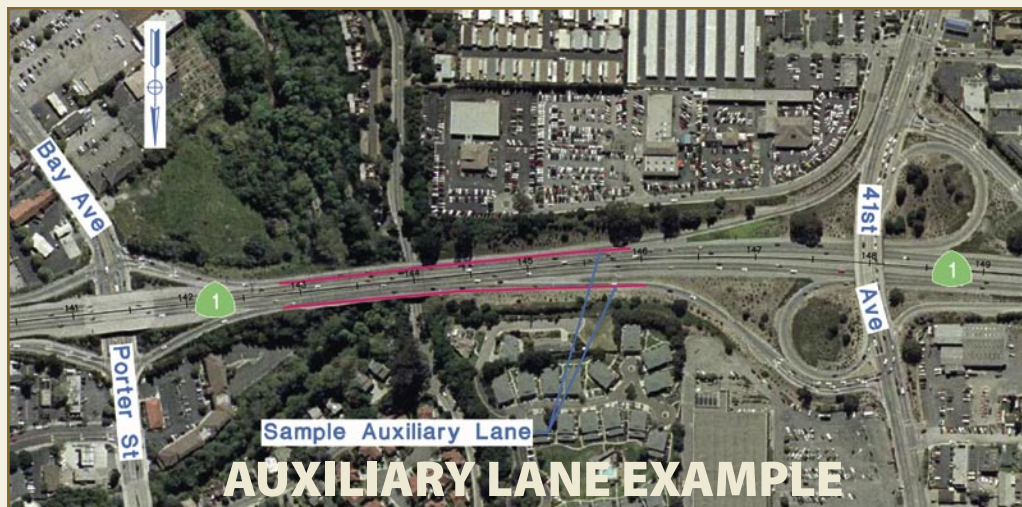
**More detailed analysis of traffic operations will be conducted as part of the environmental process.*

Project Description

Caltrans and FHWA, in cooperation with the SCCRTC, are proposing the following improvements:

- Add northbound and southbound auxiliary lanes on Highway 1 between Soquel Avenue and Morrissey Boulevard
- Widen shoulders for disabled vehicles and CHP enforcement
- Reconstruct the La Fonda Avenue overcrossing with 10-foot shoulders and 5-foot sidewalks that would:
 - Take weaving movements of vehicles entering and exiting Highway 1 out of the existing freeway lanes
 - Improve access between Harbor High School and DeLaveaga Elementary School, and residential neighborhoods on either side of Highway 1
 - Improve bicycle and pedestrian access across Highway 1

The proposed Auxiliary Lanes Project is a separate project from the State Route 1 HOV Lane Widening Project that is currently under environmental review. This project offers earlier low-cost traffic service improvements for this segment of Highway 1, continuing from the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project, while the longer-term HOV lane project continues to be evaluated.



What is an Auxiliary Lane?

“Auxiliary lanes” are constructed between freeway on- and off-ramps to enable traffic entering and exiting the freeway to increase and decrease speed outside of the main travel lanes. By separating these on and off movements from the main line, auxiliary lanes improve safety and overall freeway traffic operations. Auxiliary lanes cost less because they require less construction to interchange structures.

Project Alternatives

Three project alternatives have been identified for consideration during the environmental review process. Each will be evaluated for its ability to meet the project's stated purpose and to address anticipated impacts.

Alternative 1 – No Build/Existing Conditions

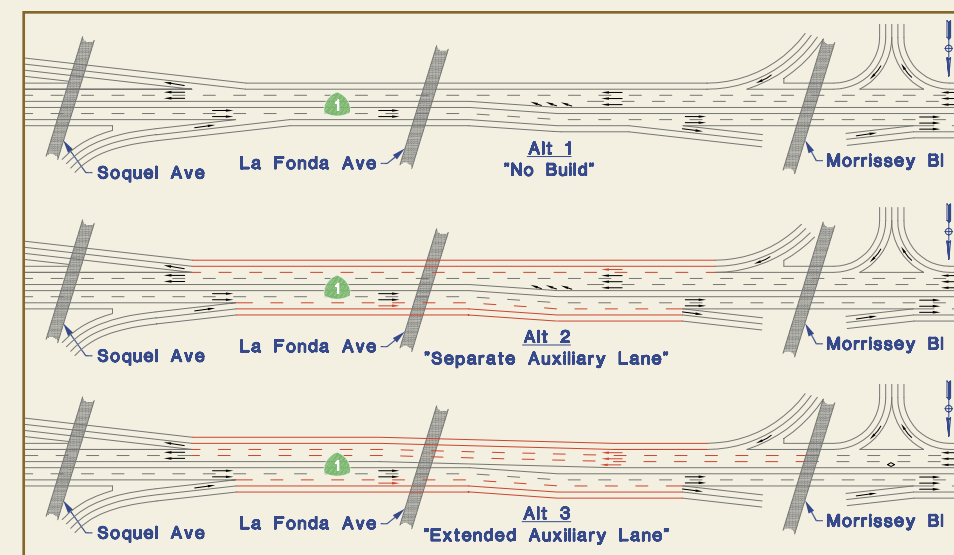
- The No-Build Alternative is evaluated to compare the benefits and impacts of not making any improvements beyond routine maintenance and other planned and approved projects to the benefits and impacts of constructing either of the build alternatives. The No-Build Alternative assumes all other projects that are already planned, programmed and approved within this segment of State Route 1 (Highway 1) or its immediate vicinity, for example the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project, will be built.

Alternative 2 – Separate Auxiliary Lane from Soquel Avenue to Morrissey Boulevard

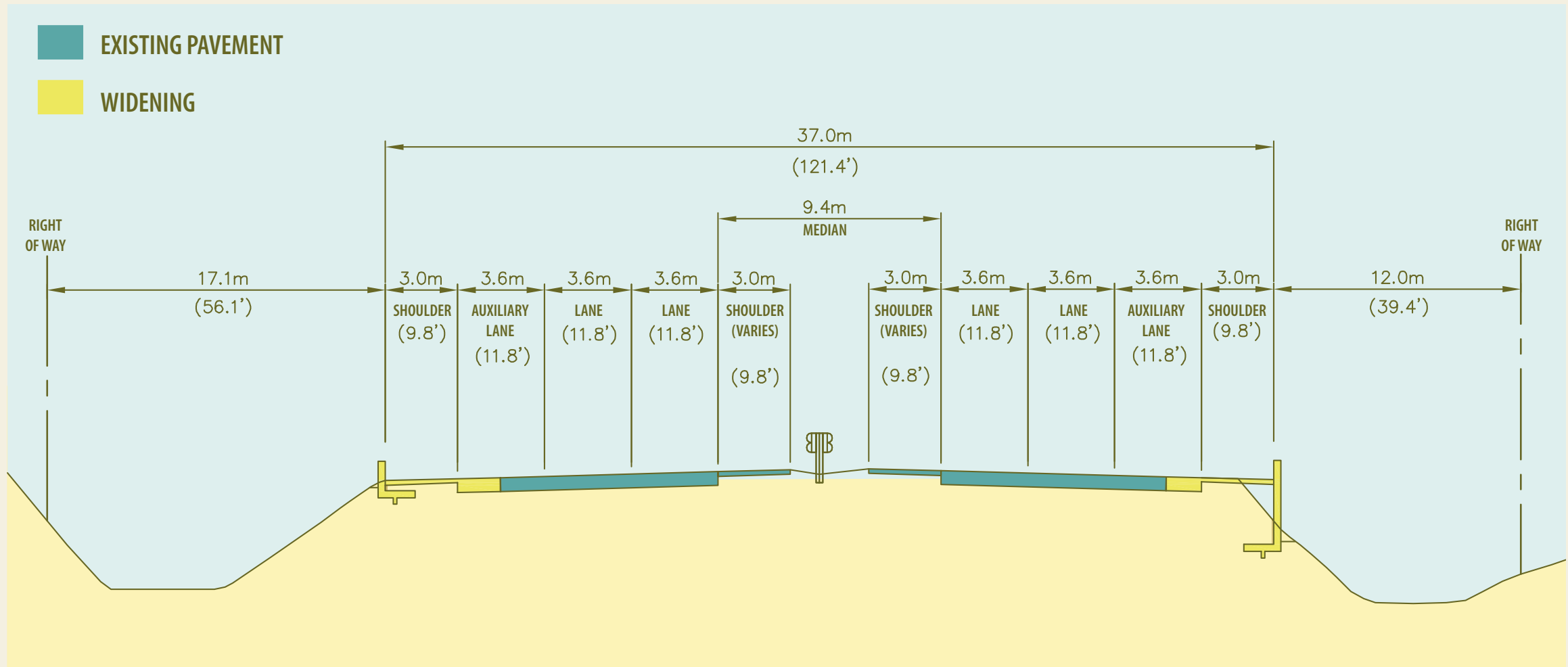
- Northbound Route 1: New auxiliary lane between the on-ramp from westbound Soquel Avenue to the Morrissey Boulevard off-ramp
- Southbound Route 1: New auxiliary lane between the on-ramp from northbound Morrissey Boulevard and the off-ramp to Soquel Avenue.
- Mainline Merge: North of the La Fonda overcrossing, the inside lane of the three southbound through lanes would be dropped, merging with the middle lane.

Alternative 3 – Extension of Ocean Street Auxiliary Lane to Soquel Avenue

- Northbound Route 1: New auxiliary lane between the on-ramp from westbound Soquel Avenue to the Morrissey Boulevard off-ramp (same as Alternative 2).
- Southbound Route 1: All Morrissey on-ramp traffic will merge into the new outside lane to be constructed with the Highway 1 and 17 Merge Lanes Project interchange improvements. This new auxiliary lane will be extended to Soquel Avenue.
- Mainline Merge: The inside through lane from the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project is preserved due to the auxiliary lane being an extension of the Ocean Street lane from the Highway 1/17 Project.



Typical Section Looking Northbound



Environmental Studies to be Performed:

- Aesthetics/Visual Impacts
- Air Quality Impacts
- Biological Resources/Wetlands
- Community Impacts/Land Use/Utilities
- Construction Phase Impacts
- Cultural Resource Impacts
(Archaeological & Architectural)
- Floodplain/Hydrology/Water Quality
- Growth Inducement
- Geology
- Hazardous Wastes
- Noise
- Traffic Operational Analysis
- Vehicular, Pedestrian and Bicycle Traffic



Anticipated Impact Issues

- Impacts to Coastal Commission wetlands/riparian areas
- Possible impacts to other biological resources
- Noise impacts with consideration for sound walls
- Community disruption during reconstruction of La Fonda Avenue overcrossing

An Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS):

- Satisfies both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Compares and evaluates build and no-build alternatives
- Circulates for public review and comment before preferred alternative is identified and selected

Environmental Review Milestones:

- Environmental Studies/Prepare Draft Document: Fall 2006
- Public Comment Period: Winter 2006/2007
- Respond to Comments, Identify Preferred Alternative: Summer 2007
- Complete Environmental Process: Fall 2007



Project Costs & Funding

- The preliminary cost estimate for project development, design and construction is approximately \$11.3 million.
- More detailed cost estimates will be prepared as the project is further defined and as studies progress.
- The environmental project review and construction are partially funded with federal funds. Caltrans and the SCCRTC will consider allocating state and regional transportation funds to the project.
- To accommodate the timing of funding availability and to reduce construction-related impacts, construction phasing for the Auxiliary Lanes Project may be considered. Initial phases include:
 - Phase 1 – Soquel Avenue /Morrissey Boulevard southbound auxiliary lane and reconstruction of La Fonda Avenue overcrossing
 - Phase 2 – Soquel Avenue /Morrissey Boulevard northbound auxiliary lane



Environmental Review & Project Key Milestones



** Project schedule subject to change.*

How to Stay Involved

- Read informational materials
- Attend public meetings on the project
- Visit the Caltrans website:
www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects
- To comment on the environmental studies contact:
 - Bobi Lyon-Ritter, Senior Environmental Planner
Caltrans, Central Region Environmental
2015 E. Shields, Suite 100, Fresno, CA 93726
Phone: (559) 243-8153 or email: bobi_lyon-ritter@dot.ca.gov
- For more information on the project contact:
 - Bobi Lyon-Ritter, Senior Environmental Planner
Caltrans, Central Region Environmental
Phone: (559) 243-9178 or e-mail: bobi_lyon-ritter@dot.ca.gov
 - Kim Shultz, SCCRTC Project Manager
Phone (831) 460-3200 or email: info@sccrtc.org
- To receive updates on the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes Project, subscribe to SCCRTC's E-news on www.sccrtc.org

